

June 3 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1993

tives of section 402 of the Act.

Sincerely,

BILL CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Thomas S. Foley, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. The Presidential determination of June 2 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Trade With Bulgaria

June 3, 1993

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I hereby transmit a report concerning emigration laws and policies of the Republic of Bulgaria as required by subsections 402(b) and 409(b) of Title IV of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended ("the Act") (19 U.S.C. 2432(b) and 2439(b)). I have determined that Bulgaria is in full compliance with the criteria in subsections 402(a) and 409(a) of the Act. As required by Title IV, I will provide the Congress with peri-

odic reports regarding Bulgaria's compliance with these emigration standards.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Thomas S. Foley, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. The Presidential determination is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks on the Withdrawal of the Nomination of Lani Guinier To Be an Assistant Attorney General and an Exchange With Reporters

June 3, 1993

The President. Good evening. It is with deep regret that I am announcing tonight the withdrawal of the nomination of Lani Guinier to be Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights.

Earlier this evening I met with Ms. Guinier to talk through the issues that prompted my decision. I told her that had I known all along the intense controversy this nomination would inspire I would not have asked her to undergo the ordeal, and I am sorry that she has suffered as much as she has.

At the time of the nomination I had not read her writings. In retrospect, I wish I had. Today, as a matter of fairness to her, I read some of them again in good detail. They clearly lend themselves to interpretations that do not represent the views that I expressed on civil rights during my campaign and views that I hold very dearly, even though there is much in them with which I agree. I have to tell you that had I read them before I nominated her, I would not have done so.

Now, I want to make it clear that that is not to say that I agree with all the attacks on her. She has been subject to a vicious series of willful distortions on many issues, including the quota issue. And that has made this decision all the more difficult.

The Lani Guinier I know is a person of high integrity, great intellect, strong character, and a superb civil rights record. That's why I nominated her. I agree with civil rights leaders and members of the Congressional Black Caucus that she is a wonderful lawyer. And I want all of you to know that if this nomination could be fought out on her character or her record as a civil rights lawyer, I would stay with it to the end, if we didn't get but one or two votes in the Senate.

It is not the fear of defeat that has prompted this decision. It is the certainty that the battle would be carried on a ground that I could not defend. The dilemma with which I have struggled basically comes down to this: Should we

have proceeded with a confirmation battle that would give her more ample opportunity to clarify her views but would guarantee a bloody and divisive conflict over civil rights based on ideas that I, as President, could not defend.

Because the controversy over her academic writings includes mischaracterizations, this battle, unfortunately, has already polarized our country. My campaign for the Presidency was based on trying to unite Americans on the basis of race, opportunity, and responsibility, the idea that we could all work together to reach common solutions. And I regret very much the bitterness and the divisiveness which has occurred already.

I am well aware that this withdrawal will upset many people in this country who believe in Lani and had hoped that she might be confirmed. I can only pledge to them that I will continue to work, as I have for nearly 20 years, for the cause of civil rights and that I want an administration second to none in its dedication to civil rights.

I will be consulting promptly with the Attorney General and with other Members of the Senate and House committees and with civil rights leaders about a replacement for Lani. I hope to have an announcement in the next few days. In the meantime, I want to again say I take full responsibility for what has happened here. I want to express my sorrow about what has happened to Lani Guinier and to say again I think that she is one of the ablest civil rights lawyers I have ever known, and I wish this battle could be fought over that rather than ideas that I myself cannot embrace.

Q. Mr. President, Attorney General Reno has been a staunch defender of Ms. Guinier. Did she urge you to keep her on, or is she fully on board with your decision to abandon this nomination?

The President. I believe she is. I would urge you to talk to her about that.

Q. Mr. President, could you just give us an idea of what part of her writings you really had trouble with?

The President. Yes, I can give you an idea. In the Michigan Law Review there was an article. Lani analyzed the weaknesses of the present remedies available under the Voting Rights Act—and many of her analyses I agree with—but seemed to be arguing for principles of proportional representation in minority veto as general remedies that I think are inappropriate as

general remedies and antidemocratic, very difficult to defend.

Now, the Supreme Court has obviously changed the law on that, but the whole thrust of that kind of argument, it seems to me, is inconsistent with the arguments that I tried to make to members of all races all during my campaign.

Q. Mr. President, what part did your friendship, yours and Mrs. Clinton's, with Guinier play in your decision to nominate her and perhaps in your decision—or your neglect of her record at the time that you did nominate her?

The President. Well, Hillary played no role in this nomination or this decision and so deserves no blame or credit for it. But the fact that I have known her since law school and had actually seen her in action as a civil rights practitioner played a very large role in my desire to nominate her. That is, I thought it would be not only interesting, but positive to have, for the first time, someone who had been a career civil rights lawyer head that division.

And frankly, I think the fact that I had known her and cared about her and admired her probably contributed to the way this thing has been handled in a kind of a drawn-out fashion. And it may be the adequacy or inadequacy of the briefings I received about this issue is partly based on the assumption that I must have known everything she'd written about since I knew her as a lawyer. I think that's probably true.

Q. Mr. President, there's a perception among some of your critics among the Black Caucus that your move to the center and your desire to have conservative Democratic votes in the Senate for your economic plan, and your health plan to come, played a large role in this. And they are saying—Craig Washington said, for instance, today, that he was with you in the House vote on the economic plan but won't be with you because of your decision to, in his view, cut and run on Lani Guinier. What do you say to those people and how—

The President. I would say two things. Number one, this is about my center, not about the political center. I will say again, I would gladly fight this nomination to the last moment, if nobody wanted to vote her, nobody, if it were on the grounds that I could defend. If somebody said, "You know, she sued the State of Arkansas, and she sued all these other people, and she came out for remedies in her law practice that

weren't right, and she ran over this group and that group," I would say, "Fine, let's fight this thing out. You know, I know that. I have personal knowledge of that. You are wrong." And if everybody in the Senate disagreed with me, I would stay with it to the bitter end.

The problem is that this battle will be waged based on her academic writings. And I cannot fight a battle that I know is divisive, that is an uphill battle, that is distracting to the country, if I do not believe in the ground of the battle. That is the only problem. This has nothing to do with a political center. This has to do with my center.

Now, let me say about Craig Washington, whatever he does for the rest of his life, I'll be grateful to him for what he did and what he said in fighting that economic problem through. I know how strongly he feels about it. I can tell you, I received—if any—there's pressure over the issue. I got more pressure to stay with this than to drop it. But in the end, I had to do what I thought was right. Whether I am right or wrong, I tell you tonight, I have done what I think is right.

Q. Mr. President, did she agree with you?

Q. Did she agree with you?

Q. Has she withdrawn or are you withdrawing her?

The President. I am—I think you'd better ask her what she said.

Q. Well, if she comes—have you withdrawn her name?

The President. Well, she's in town and we've—I think she'll probably have a statement later tonight. I have no idea what she will say.

Q. Did she ask you not to withdraw her name, sir?

The President. Well, you know what she wanted. She wanted her hearing. But she was surprised that I felt the way I did. You know, this is the first long, detailed conversation we've had about it. It was a very painful thing between two people who have liked and admired each other a long time. This was one of the most difficult meetings I've ever had in my life. But I did what I thought was right.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:05 p.m. in the Briefing Room at the White House.

Statement on Sanctions Against Haiti June 4, 1993

One of the cornerstones of our foreign policy is to support the global march toward democracy and to stand by the world's new democracies. The promotion of democracy, which not only reflects our values but also increases our security, is especially important in our own hemisphere. As part of that goal, I consider it a high priority to return democracy to Haiti and to return its democratically elected President, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, to his office.

We should recall Haiti's strides toward democracy just a few years back. Seven years ago, tired of the exploitative rule that had left them the poorest nation in our hemisphere, the Haitian people rose up and forced the dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier to flee. In December 1990, in a remarkable exercise of democracy, the Haitian people held a free and fair election, and two-thirds of them voted for President Aristide.

Nineteen months ago, however, that progress toward democracy was thwarted when the Hai-

tian military illegally and violently ousted President Aristide from office. Since taking office in January, the United States Government has worked steadily with the international community in an effort to restore President Aristide and democracy to Haiti. The OAS and United Nations Special Envoy, Dante Caputo, has demonstrated great dedication and tenacity. To support Mr. Caputo's effort, Secretary of State Christopher in March named U.S. Ambassador Lawrence Pezzullo as our Special Adviser for Haiti.

We and the international community have made progress. The presence of the International Civilian Mission has made a concrete contribution to human rights in Haiti. Mr. Caputo's consultations with all the parties indicated that a negotiated solution is possible.

Unfortunately, the parties in Haiti have not been willing to make the decisions or take the steps necessary to begin democracy's restoration.